



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT IV.B.

To: Members of the State Board of Education

From: Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner*

Date: January 14, 2009

Subject: Major Capital School Construction Program; *Concept Approval Consideration*;
Chelsea School Department, preK-8 elementary school construction project.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The Chelsea elementary school project was rated number 15 on the 2004-2005 Approved Projects List. The project will house grades preK-8 and will replace existing Chelsea Elementary School.

A complete New vs. Renovation Study is on file with the Department of Education which supports the Department's recommendation to build a new preK-8 school in Chelsea.

The building has been designed to High Performance Standards. All appropriate State and local agencies have been contacted, and where necessary, documented approvals are on file.

Prior to proceeding with Concept Approval for this project, Superintendent Boynton investigated consolidation with neighboring school districts. There was no interest in a consolidated project.

With the expansion of the Togus Hospital and the rural nature of the community, the school will be able to serve Chelsea's future growth with little or no building expansion.

The proposed school's location on the site will solve a major safety issue both for students and for vehicles serving or passing the school. The new location will also move the school away from the Chelsea Town Office and the alternative educational program will also be housed in a more appropriate setting.

This Concept Approval is being requested pursuant to M.R.S.A. Title 20-A, Section 15905(1).

The Chelsea School Department is requesting Concept Approval for a new preK-8 elementary school qualifying under State statute and State Board of Education Rule, Chapter 61, Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects.

Superintendent Francis Boynton has provided the following project description statement:

The development of the Chelsea Building Project has been a focus of the administration and School Committee since 1998. The need was seen as the building was reviewed for structural and code deficiencies at that time. Although some immediate concerns were addressed, the electrical and general facility inadequacies remain today. Early in 2000, the Committee determined the need for 4 additional portable reconditioned classrooms to the facility in addition to the 6 attached portables that were build on site in 1993. These structures are showing their age.

The community of Chelsea has provided adequate funds to support the maintenance and upkeep of the building; the general structure, heating system, electrical system, and other components are beginning to age past their life expectancy. In general, the building has reached its useful limit and is rapidly becoming a liability as the components for repair are becoming hard to find. Although a recent project has made a significant difference in the air quality and structure, the building still lacks in this vital area for student health and learning. Community support and skill has certainly played a role in advancing the technology and communication components of the school, but the program has needs, which go beyond the cost effectiveness of a major retrofit.

For the school district, the long-term effect will be a reduction of costs for energy use, repairs, and maintenance. The efficiencies of a new building can be translated into program development and educational advancement in an improved educational environment. Students will no longer have to put on coats to go into the building to get a drink of water or use the facilities.

The development of a new school will become a key factor for the community of Chelsea. The school is a community center, which is vital to the character of the community. As the centerpiece of the community, the school will serve the education of the children in a warm educational environment and become a center of pride for the community

Project Information

Project: PreK-8 Elementary School
Superintendent: Francis Boynton
Principal: Andrew Doiron
Architect: Oak Point Associates
School(s) to be closed: The existing Chelsea Elementary School

Exhibit IV.B.
Concept Approval Consideration
Chelsea School Department, PreK-8 Elementary School
Date: January 14, 2009
Page -3-

Project Budget Information

Total Project Cost: \$18,856,121
Local Only (no State participation): \$301,448
Approved for State/Local Debt Service Subsidy: \$18,404,650
Anticipated Maine High Performance Schools Energy Grant: \$150,023

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Construction Committee voted unanimously on January 5, 2009, to recommend that the State Board of Education grant Concept Approval to Chelsea School Department for a preK-8 elementary school in Chelsea, Maine.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

The Commissioner recommends that the State Board of Education grant Concept Approval to the Chelsea School Department for a preK-8 elementary school in Chelsea, Maine, as a Major Capital School Construction Project and approve the concept budget as presented.**

*Prepared by the School Facilities Services Team

**This approval constitutes Concept Approval. Final Funding Approval may be subject to adjustment under Section 10, Subsection 1, of the State Board of Education Rules for School Construction Projects, which states:

“Final Funding Approval by the Commissioner establishes the Project Budget and takes place after construction bids have been received. At that time, the Commissioner may reduce the budget to finance the project, thus providing additional funds for other projects.”